

## NIFA in the News – Week of April 9, 2012

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### In the News

**4-H members explore issues affecting youth at 2012 National Conference (McPherson Sentinel 4/2).** 4-H members from across the country came to the nation's capital to make their voice heard as part of the 2012 National 4-H Conference, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). [Link](#)

**No more left to cut in agriculture budget (Southwest Farm Press 4/5).** Wheat farmers, researchers, millers and bakers were in Washington, D.C., to deliver a simple message to members of Congress: there is no more to cut from federal funding for agriculture research. Funding for USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) will be down 12 percent since the federal government's 2010 fiscal year, assuming modest increases proposed in the Obama Administration's FY2013 budget are adopted. [Link](#)

**90 Hunger and Nutrition Organizations Urge Congress to Protect Nutrition Programs in the Upcoming Farm Bill (PR Newswire 4/9).** Over 90 national and regional hunger relief, public health, faith-based and other advocacy organizations sent a letter to Congress today urging the Senate and House Agriculture Committees to strengthen and protect nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill. •Maintain funding for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for vital research on nutrition, hunger and food security, and obesity prevention. [Link](#)

**USDA Releases Requests for Applications for the AFRI Childhood Obesity Challenge Area (Wichita Eagle 4/10).** A Kansas State University initiative is helping rural communities across the nation restock their town with a disappearing business: grocery stores. Since 2007, members of the university's Rural Grocery Initiative have studied the struggles of grocery stores in rural communities and have worked with several communities to help those stores stay open or start a new grocery store. The initiative -- part of the university's Center for Engagement and Community Development -- was recently awarded a nearly \$409,000 grant from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. [Link](#)

**Onslow Cooperative Extension to establish incubator farms (Jacksonville Daily News 4/11).** A program to grow the next generation of farmers is getting under way in the area. Jacksonville/Onslow County is one of five communities selected statewide to establish incubator farms to try to encourage interest in farming fruits and vegetables. The communities will receive planning support under the Center for Environmental Farming Systems program, said Larry Kent, program assistant at the Onslow County Cooperative Extension. With the average age of the American farmer now at 57, Kent said the National Institute of Food and Agriculture's Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program is looking for ways to encourage interested individuals to become farmers. [Link](#)

**Breakthrough in fight against pig virus (Western Farm Press 4/11).** Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) is a disease that costs the U.S. pork industry an estimated \$664 million per year. Recently, scientists have made a breakthrough in research efforts to curb the disease. A consortium of scientists from around the country, with funding from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) and Agricultural Research Service (ARS), have discovered a genetic marker in pigs that identifies whether or not a pig has reduced susceptibility to PRRS. [Link](#)

**4-H Advances Environmental Science Education with \$1.1 Million from Toyota (The Auto Channel 4/12).** National 4-H Council is pleased to announce that Toyota will continue its support of 4-H's youth-focused water quality and conservation programming. This \$1.1 million gift will fund the expansion of 4-H2O Community Projects and sponsor the 2012 4-H National Youth Science Day. [Link](#)

**'Naked oats' could cut cost for organic chicken production (Farm and Dairy 4/12).** Scientists with Ohio State University have received a four-year, \$896,000 USDA grant to study the feasibility of incorporating so-called "naked oats" into organic farming rotations as a way to cut the cost of producing organic chicken. The grant comes through the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative program of USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture. [Link](#)

**Research 'critical' investment (Iowa Farmer Today 4/12).** Catherine Woteki, the USDA's chief scientist and under secretary for research, education and economics (REE), recently addressed budget challenges facing REE and its units, strengthening partnerships with land-grant universities and ensuring the United States remains the premier research enterprise in food and agricultural sciences. In National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), the agency of most concern to the university community, we haven't seen the increases we had hoped would occur in the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) competitive-grants program. We've seen a continued decline of the formula funds. Taken collectively, it's an overall erosion of support for agricultural science. From the universities' perspective, key programs that are so important for supporting graduate students and providing jobs and internships for undergraduate students have been scaled back. [Link](#)

**University initiative using funding to help reopen grocery stores (KSNT 4/13).** A Kansas State University initiative is helping rural communities across the nation restock their town with a disappearing business: grocery stores. Since 2007, members of the university's Rural Grocery Initiative have studied the struggles of grocery stores in rural communities and have worked with several communities to help those stores stay open or start a new grocery store. The initiative -- part of the university's Center for Engagement and Community Development -- was recently awarded a nearly \$409,000 grant from the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative. [Link](#)

**Also for aquaculture – 2012 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative Foundational Program Request for Applications (Michigan Aquaculture Association 4/13).** The National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) has determined that it is in the best interest of all concerned to combine the Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 and FY 2013 Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Foundational Program Request for Applications (RFA). [Link](#)

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